In the claims:

For the Examiner's convenience, all pending claims are presented below with changes shown.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

a processor ~~determining, at least in part~~ at a first node~~, at least one~~ determining one or more communication protocols via which a second node is capable of communicating with the first node~~, the determining being~~ based ~~at least in part~~ upon ~~at least one~~ or more parameters received from the second node during an initialization of communication between the first node and the second node, the ~~at least~~ or more parameters specifying~~, at least in part,~~ the ~~at least~~ one or more communication protocols; and

the processor selecting first drivers to implement a first communication protocol if the one or more parameters specify the first communication protocol.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

the processor selecting second drivers to implement a second communication protocol if the one or more parameters specifies the second protocol ~~selecting, at least in part at the first node, one or more drivers capable of implementing, at least in part, the at least one communication protocol~~.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers comprise at least one channel framing driver that is capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one framing protocol that is compatible with

at least one of an Ethernet protocol and an Asynchronous Transfer Mode protocol.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~2~~, further comprising:

in response ~~at least in part~~ to the selecting, invoking a plug and play (PnP) protocol manager to initiate loading~~, at least in part,~~ of the one or more drivers into memory.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers are capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one encapsulation protocol that is compatible with an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol and an Ethernet protocol.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein: the first node comprises at least one modem driver; and the determining is performed~~, at least in part,~~ by the at least one modem driver.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein:

the initialization of the communication comprises a negotiation between the first node and the second node; and in response ~~at least in part~~ to a request from the first node, the second node transmits during the negotiation the ~~at least~~ or more parameters to the first node.

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

~~circuitry that is capable of determining, at least in part~~ a processor at a first node~~, at least one~~ to determine one or more communication protocols via which a second node is

capable of communicating with the first node~~, the circuitry being capable of determining the at least one communication protocol~~ based ~~at least in part~~ upon ~~at least~~ one or more parameters received by the first node from the second node during an initialization of communication between the first node and the second node, the ~~at least~~ one or more parameters specifying~~, at least in part,~~ the ~~at least~~ one or more communication protocols, and to select first drivers to implement a first communication protocol if the one or more parameters specifies the first communication protocol.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein:

the processor selects second drivers to implement a second communication protocol if the one or more parameters specifies the second protocol ~~circuitry is also capable of selecting, at least in part at the first node, one or more drivers capable of implementing, at least in part, the at least one communication protocol~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8 ~~9~~, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers comprise at least one channel framing driver that is capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one framing protocol that is compatible with at least one of an Ethernet protocol and an Asynchronous Transfer Mode protocol.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8 ~~9~~, wherein:

the ~~circuitry~~ processor is also capable of invoking a plug and play (PnP) protocol manager to initiate loading~~, at least in part,~~ of the one or more drivers into memory.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8 ~~9~~, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers are capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one encapsulation protocol that is compatible with an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol and an Ethernet protocol.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8 ~~9~~, wherein:

the ~~circuitry~~ processor is capable of executing at least one modem driver; and

execution of the at least one modem driver by the ~~circuitry~~ processor results~~, at least in part,~~ in the ~~circuitry~~ processor being capable~~, at least in part,~~ of determining the ~~at least~~ one or more communication protocols.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein:

the initialization of the communication comprises a negotiation between the first node and the second node; and in response at least in part to a request from the first node, the second node transmits during the negotiation the ~~at least~~ or more parameters to the first node.

15. (Currently Amended) An article comprising: a storage medium having stored thereon instructions that when executed by a machine result in the following:

~~determining, at least in part~~ at a first node~~, at least one~~ determining one or more communication protocols via which a second node is capable of communicating with the first node~~, the determining being~~ based ~~at least in part~~ upon ~~at least~~ one or more parameters received from the second node during an initialization of communication between the first

node and the second node, the ~~at least~~ or more parameters specifying~~, at least in part,~~ the ~~at least~~ one or more communication protocols; and

the processor selecting first drivers to implement a first communication protocol if the one or more parameters specify the first communication protocol.

16. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15, wherein:

the instructions when executed by the machine also result in selecting second drivers to implement a second communication protocol if the one or more parameters specifies the second protocol ~~selecting, at least in part at the first node, one or more drivers capable of implementing, at least in part, the at least one communication protocol~~.

17. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15 ~~16~~, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers comprise at least one channel framing driver that is capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one framing protocol that is compatible with at least one of an Ethernet protocol and an Asynchronous Transfer Mode protocol.

18. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15 ~~16~~, wherein:

the instructions when executed by the machine also result in, in response ~~at least in part~~ to the selecting, invoking a plug and play (PnP) protocol manager to initiate loading~~, at least in part,~~ of the one or more drivers into memory.

19. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15 ~~16~~, wherein:

the ~~one or more~~ first drivers are capable of implementing~~, at least in part,~~ at least one encapsulation protocol that is compatible with an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol and an Ethernet protocol.

20. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15, wherein:

the first node comprises at least one modem driver; and

the determining of the at least one communication protocol is performed~~, at least in part,~~ by the at least one modem driver.

21. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 15, wherein:

the initialization of the communication comprises a negotiation between the first node and the second node; and in response ~~at least in part~~ to a request from the first node, the second node transmits during the negotiation the ~~at least~~ or more parameters to the first node.

22. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a first node comprising:

circuitry that includes a circuit card; and

a circuit board that includes a circuit card slot that is capable of coupling the circuit card to the circuit board; and

a second node;

the circuitry being capable of determining~~, at least in part, at least~~ one or more communication protocols via which the second node is capable of communicating with the first node~~, the circuitry being capable of determining the at least one communication protocol~~

based ~~at least in part~~ upon ~~at least~~ one or more parameters received by the circuit card from the second node during an initialization of communication between the first node and the second node, ~~at least~~ one or more parameters specifying~~, at least in part,~~ the ~~at least~~ one or more communication protocols and to select first drivers to implement a first communication protocol if the one or more parameters specifies the first communication protocol.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein:

the circuit board comprises a bus and a host processor coupled to the bus; and when the circuit card is coupled to the slot, the circuitry is coupled to the bus.

24. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein:

the circuit card comprises a digital subscriber line (DSL) modem.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein:

a central office (CO) comprises the second node; and customer premises equipment (CPE) comprises the modem.